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**Note on the Visit to East Timor of four members of the
European Parliament, 16-18 August 1988**

The four members of the European Parliament, J.L. Janssen van Raay (CDA) of Holland, Beate Weber (SPD) of West Germany, Guy Guermeur (RPR-Gaullist) of France, and Bryan Cassidy (Conservative) of Britain arrived in East Timor late in the morning of 16 August and left around midday on 18 August.

Purpose of the mission

According to Ali Alatas, the Indonesian Foreign Minister, the purpose was to "counter-balance the negative reports that are circulating in the European Parliament. Parliamentarians will now see with their own eyes the real situation in East Timor". [De Gelderlander, 5 August 1988] According to Janssen van Raay, the purpose was to discredit the opinions of Portugal circulating in the European Parliament regarding the situation in East Timor. "The delegation is going primarily to prove that these opinions are untrue." [Editor, 20 August 1988] (See Appendix I)

The visit occurred shortly before several important decisions on the international arena were to be taken, which Indonesia is very eager to influence. They are: a resolution on human rights violations in East Timor at the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in the last week of August, the resolution on East Timor to be discussed at the European Parliament on 15 September, the meeting of foreign ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement in September where Indonesia hopes to become president of the Movement for the coming three years, and the UN General Assembly where a resolution on East Timor may be tabled.

The official report of the delegation was immediately used, with the support of a powerful team of twelve Indonesian diplomats, to defeat the East Timor resolution at the UN Sub-Commission in Geneva. The voting took place on 29 August.

Status and funding of the trip

The delegation visited Indonesia as the guests of Lieutenant-General Kharis Suhud, chair of the Indonesian Parliament. The trip was funded by the Indonesian Government. A ticket that had been provided for a fifth member, Jean Penders, who withdrew at the last minute, was used by another Dutch MEP named Eversdijk, who did not join the other four on their visit to East Timor.

By contrast, Janssen van Raay said that plans for a visit to East Timor by Ien van den Heuvel, rapporteur for Indonesia and East Timor in the European Parliament, had to be abandoned because of lack of cash [Editor, 20 August 1988]

The role of Janssen van Raay

Janssen van Raay is from a family that lived for generations in Indonesia. He was born in Bangka, Indonesia. He prides himself on being Indonesian by birth although he is now a Dutch citizen. He speaks Indonesian fluently.

Prior to the August 1988 visit, he visited East Timor twice. The first time was in July-August 1987, though nothing was heard about that visit at the time. The second visit was in January 1988, when wide publicity was given

to his report praising Indonesia's running of East Timor and rejecting charges about human rights violations.

Janssen van Raay selected the MEPs, in consultation with the Indonesian Government. Discussing the selection in his *Editor* interview, he uses the words "for me and for Indonesia". None of those chosen was involved in the European Parliament's foreign affairs commission. Although he made it clear that the purpose was to discredit Portugal's attitude towards East Timor, he also said that the MEPs had been selected because of their integrity, neutrality and absence of prejudice (see Appendix I).

Programme of the visit

The programme followed the same pattern as all previous known visits by parliamentarians to East Timor, undertaken under Indonesian auspices. For two days, the delegation received intense briefing from many high-level officials in Jakarta. After arriving in East Timor, they were briefed by the Governor, members of the local assembly, and by a large number of departmental chiefs in Dili. They also met Mgr Belo, the Bishop. The only striking difference was that they were not briefed by the military chief, the commander of Korem 164, apparently not to draw attention to the army's role in East Timor.

The delegation arrived in Jakarta in the afternoon of 14 August. They were hosted in the evening by the leadership of the Indonesian Parliament. The whole of Monday was spent being briefed by Indonesian ministers and government officials. They flew to Dili on Tuesday and spent the whole of that day being briefed by officials of the "provincial" administration.

On Wednesday, 17 August, they spent part of the morning attending the anniversary of Indonesia's national day, then departed for the eastern zone. Assuming that they left Dili at around eleven am, they spent the remaining seven hours, till it grew dark when they were in Baucau, travelling to the east and visiting three places. Their initial flight from Dili was aborted and the pilot returned without warning to Dili (see below). They then flew to Vikeke and from there flew to Baucau, touching down briefing at a village near Baucau. It is not likely that they spent more than about three hours actually visiting places and speaking to anyone on the ground.

On Thursday morning, they flew to Atauro, visited the island briefly, then returned to Dili. After lunch, they left Dili by plane for Kupang in West Timor where they had meetings with local administrators. Friday, 19 August was spent in Bali, also meeting local administrators. On Saturday, they returned to Jakarta, spent several hours in 'debriefing sessions' with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Armed Forces Commander and the Minister of Defence, and the leadership of Parliament. They left Jakarta that evening.

'Investigative' part of the six-day trip

The delegation's itinerary did not officially include a programme of investigation. The final report as well as the verbal description given by Beate Weber (see Appendix II) reveals that they hardly met any ordinary East Timorese and certainly had no meaningful discussions with any. During their brief trip to the east when an investigation of sorts did take place, they were at all times escorted by military officials as well as officials of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry which made it impossible to hear the genuine views of any Timorese they may have met.

Shortly before the visit, Theo Sambuaga, member of the Indonesian Parliament and chair of its Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation Board, who jointly hosted the MEPs, said, in response to the founding of the newly-established **Parliamentarians for East Timor**: "If they want to observe the current situation in East Timor, please come to Indonesia because it is open to anyone wishing to observe.... But we refuse anyone wanting to go to East Timor for fact-finding because that means they will interfere in our internal affairs". [Jakarta Post, 18 July 1988]

A month later, the Indonesian ambassador to the UN in Geneva, Wisber Loeis, told the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities that "those organisations which have scant interest in the well-being of the East Timorese have been discouraged from visiting the province since their actions constitute no more than a time-wasting exercise which does nothing to constructively help the people of the province". [Right of Reply by Ambassador Wisber Loeis, 19 August 1988]

The amount of time and money invested in the four MEP's six-day visit to Indonesia is a mark of the importance the Indonesian Government attached to the visit at the present stage of diplomatic controversy over East Timor.

The conditions set for the delegation's programme

Janssen van Raay said that he had insisted on certain conditions for the visit, namely that the delegation could speak to whoever it wanted and could land anywhere it wanted. He mentioned no conditions about the circumstances under which meetings with Timorese should take place. Nor is it clear who translated for the MEPs on the few occasions that they met any ordinary people. Apparently, Janssen van Raay translated for those Timorese who speak Indonesian but who translated for those who spoke Portuguese or Tetum?

The delegation made one unscheduled landing and met a village chief who spoke in favour of integration. The conversation cannot be given any credence unless it can be ascertained that it took place out of earshot of Indonesian officials. Although Weber said that there was "no military confrontation going on", it is difficult to see how she could draw any conclusion following a visit that could not have lasted more than half-an-hour. Presumably she was told this by the local military commander.

Comparisons with the planned visit by Portuguese parliamentarians

The Portuguese Parliament has received an invitation from the Indonesian Parliament to visit Indonesia and East Timor. Although its reply has not been made public, it is known that the Parliament has stipulated a number of conditions. These reportedly include: the opportunity to meet with the resistance, no limit on the number of persons included in the delegation, complete freedom of movement and free and spontaneous meetings with East Timorese not in the presence of Indonesian officials. The Portuguese parliamentarians will find it far easier to communicate orally with Timor because of the absence of a language barrier. We understand that these terms they are now the subject of consultations between Portugal and Indonesia at the UN headquarters in New York.

Several times during the MEPs' visit, the impression was given that the Portuguese Parliament was prevaricating or even that it had rejected the invitation. This is untrue. At no time were the reasons for the delay in the Portuguese MPs' visit explained.

Meeting ordinary East Timorese

From a careful study of the delegation's report and the verbal account given by Weber, it has been possible to reconstruct a more detailed programme of the visit than the one attached to the official report (see Appendix III). It appears that during a brief visit to Viqueque, the MEPs met Indonesian military personnel only and met no Timorese. It is not clear whether they met and spoke to anyone in the market they visited in Baucau. There is no reference to any conversations that may have taken place with ordinary Timorese. In the interrogation centre at the former Hotel Flamboyant, they spoke to only one family who we assume may have been prisoners, and who told them that they were "participating in a programme of development".

The visit to Atauro island on 18 August is not a serious attempt at investigation since this is no longer being used as a detention centre.

It has been reported that in one district visited by the delegation, thirty Timorese were summoned and interrogated by the military after the MEPs left [The Guardian, 24 August 1988]. Governor Carrascalao did not deny this, but we have only his word for it that "they could choose not to reply and nothing would happen to them". That is not in accord with our own information about what happens to Timorese questioned in the wake of foreign visits.

Embarrassing hitches for the Indonesians

Weber appears to have been the only member to succeed in stretching the conditions requested by Janssen van Raay to the limits. (See Appendix II)

- She discovered that the aircraft taking them to a place named by their hosts was going in another direction. (How many visitors to East Timor, we now wonder, have been taken to places that were not the places they thought they were?)

- Following the threat of withdrawal by the whole team, after the unexpected return of their helicopter to Dili, the delegation was eventually taken to Viqueque, but delaying tactics in Dili enabled the Indonesians to send advance warnings to Viqueque to make at least minimal preparations of the kind we know take place for all foreign visits. According to a Dutch newspaper which interviewed Weber after her return: "In particular Viqueque could only be visited 'after several phone-calls were made' and the pilot of the helicopter had tried to deceive the group by flying in another direction." [Trouw, 25 August 1988]

Even so, the MEPs were able to see a far heavier military presence than they were meant to see and than was warranted by claims of "no resistance". Yet, the final report made little of this crucial discovery, apart from recommending that the military presence should be reduced. It is difficult not to conclude that the delegation's evidence regarding the military situation was based entirely on briefings by Indonesian military personnel.

- Weber's insistence on visiting the interrogation centre in Baucau was little short of a disaster for the Indonesians. Even so, the delegation failed to draw important conclusions about the way the Indonesians deceive the world regarding human rights violations.

Once again, the Indonesians used delaying tactics by arguing with Weber and by taking the MEPs to visit the market first (how long did that take?) so as to make minimal preparations, such as moving out people of the small rooms

along the corridor they went down, and making sure that no-one was in the process of being interrogated. By contrast with Weber's very alarming account, the official report said only that "we inspected the place and found nothing amiss".

Since the delegation was subjected to such blatant attempts at deception, why did they not record this in their report?

Discussions with church representatives

According to the official report, the Bishop, Mgr Belo, "expressed serious concern about continuing cases of brutality". He described the military presence as "repressive" and told them that the military, "normally very much in evidence on the streets of the capital, had been withdrawn for the visit".

Counter-balancing this, the report quoted the president of the synod of the Protestant church in East Timor who said that was "complete freedom", that they were "satisfied with integration" and had heard "nothing of any recent cases of torture". What the report did not explain was that the Protestant church is almost entirely an Indonesian creation in East Timor and serves the Indonesian community, not the Timorese, who are almost all Catholic.

Self-determination

The official report makes no mention of the fact that no act of self-determination has taken place in East Timor, as required by UN Resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV). By referring to East Timor throughout as a "province" of Indonesia, the delegation takes the stand that Indonesia's annexation is a fait accompli. In the delegation's view, the main factor, it would appear, in reaching a solution for East Timor is that "Indonesia plays a very important role in the equilibrium in the developing countries and particularly in the ASEAN zone" (Preamble). Hence, geo-political factors are given pre-eminence over East Timor's right to self-determination. All the Timorese have the right to, in the delegation's view, is: "normalisation, equalisation of opportunities and sustainable development".

However, two of the recommendations are irreconcilable. One recommends that "open and friendly discussions could be enlarged (sic) between the provincial representatives and the central government in Jakarta in order to reach a maximum level of autonomy within the flexible (sic) constitution framework of the Republic". Another recommends the creation of a "committee of wise persons" to be set up by the Indonesian and Portuguese governments, the EEC and the UN Secretary-General, in order "to seek a solution according to the will of the population". Could this mean holding a referendum? That would contradict the rest of the statement which is clearly based on the acceptance of "integration".

The BBC reported that according to Bryan Cassidy: "Whilst it was now only a matter of time before the rest of the world recognises East Timor as part of Indonesia, he and his group had stressed to the Indonesians that, to satisfy world opinion and disarm criticism, there was no substitute for a free referendum. He said the Indonesians had given numerous reasons why this was impractical but he still felt that this should be done." [Juliet Rix, for the BBC, in Dili, 19 August 1988] It was apparently Cassidy's view that the results of a referendum were a foregone conclusion. Indonesia's protestations about "impracticalities" would suggest that they are not so sure. Weber stated during a phone conversation with Yvette Lawson that she also felt that

a "kind of referendum" should be held. Asked her opinion about the involvement of the Timorese in preparations for a referendum, she said that the European Parliament should press for them to be involved. She gave the impression to Lawson, however, that self-determination was not the primary consideration.

All members of the delegation appear to be unaware of the UN General Assembly resolution 37/30, adopted in 1982, calling for consultations by the UN Secretary-General "with all parties directly concerned". But then, with the exception of Janssen van Raay, whose pro-Indonesian views are well known, none of other three MEPs had taken any interest in East Timor until they were prevailed upon, apparently at very short notice, to participate in this trip. It is not surprising therefore that they are not well informed about recent international decisions regarding East Timor.

4 September 1988

APPENDIX I

Translation

Interview of J.L. Janssen van Raay in *Editor*, the Indonesian political weekly on 20 August 1988.

Jansen van Raay who visited East Timor last January was spokesperson of the delegation of four members of the European Parliament that visited Indonesia and East Timor in August. He is a well-known lawyer and was born in Muntok, Bangka, on 1 June 1932. He is known as Jimmy and he is proud of his origins as a person of Indo-Dutch stock. He speaks Indonesian fluently. Before departing for Jakarta at the end of last week, he was interviewed by Aboeprijadi Santoso, for *Editor*, at Hotel Capitol in Amsterdam.

What is the purpose of the visit to East Timor?

As is known, Portugal has been actively campaigning for acceptance of its viewpoint regarding East Timor in the European Parliament. Its viewpoint is rejected in its entirety by Indonesia. There are some basic questions which I know to be absolutely untrue: That a rebellion is taking place in East Timor, that religious activity is under pressure and that Javanisation is taking place. The European Parliament delegation is going to East Timor to see things for themselves and primarily to prove that these opinions of Portugal are untrue.

Are you quite sure Portugal is wrong?

I've already visited East Timor.

Parliament is at present in recess. What is the status of the visit?

Indeed it is an unofficial visit.... (photocopy unclear) We received an invitation from Pak Kharis Suhud, chairman of the Indonesian Parliament. ['Pak' indicates closeness and familiarity.] The Portuguese Parliament has also been invited but till now they have not gone.

Why isn't Ien van den Heuvel, who wrote the report about East Timor, on the delegation?

She indeed once proposed that the European Parliament should send a team of observers to East Timor but it was rejected because of lack of funds. I myself took part in an EEC delegation for links with ASEAN. The European Parliament has made many orientation visits to Asia. Do I have to wait for my colleagues who deal with East Timor? I don't think so. For me and for Indonesia, the important thing is for a team of people of proven integrity, who are neutral and unbiassed, to go. People like Bryan Cassidy from the UK. He's a deeply religious Catholic and a highly respected man. Objectivity and integrity were the standards set.

Did you propose any conditions to the Indonesian government?

Yes, that we should have complete freedom to go anywhere and meet anyone. This is an absolute condition. Last January, going by helicopter, I asked the pilot suddenly to land and we landed in the place as I asked. I had received guarantees from the man who was then Minister of the Interior, Pak Supardjo Roestam. There were no problems.

But East Timor is not an open territory.

Yes, I have raised that question. I agree with Governor Carrascalao. I want to encourage the government to open the territory up. I am a Dutchman. Sukarno (Indonesia's first president) was an enemy for me and for the Dutch people, But Sukarno was right in two things: that Indonesia can only be controlled and governed by preserving the unitary state, and secondly, that the national language must be preserved. Within this framework, East Timor should be opened up like other Indonesian territories.

But doesn't Portugal continually call for a referendum?

Portugal is hypocritical. Just imagine. Holland was a colonial power and so was Portugal, for even longer. I don't think it is fitting for us to teach the Indonesians what to do. But what does Portugal do? Take a look at the fate of the former Portuguese colonies like Goa and Macao. Why were there no referendums there? They're even letting Macao fall into Chinese hands. Now, Indonesia is administering East Timor, and Portugal is asking for a referendum. How is that possible?

APPENDIX II

Beate Weber's account of the trip to the eastern zone of East Timor, on 17 August 1988, during to a telephone conversation with Yvette Lawson, 22.8.1988:

General Benny Murdani [Minister of Defence and Security, commander of the special security command, Kopkamtib, and commander of Koopskam Timtim, the special security command in charge of military operations and in overall control of East Timor] was against the idea of the delegation visiting the eastern zone. However, a military helicopter was placed at the disposal of the delegation. They travelled in the company of military personnel and Foreign Affairs Department officials.

The Indonesians proposed that they should go to a village [name not mentioned here] and the delegation agreed. During the flight, Weber asked for a map. At first, she was told that no map was available, but after she insisted, a map was produced. She then realised that they were not going in the direction of Vikeke [apparently, this was the name of the place they were said to be travelling to]. A heated conversation ensued during which Weber threatened to withdraw from the programme. Suddenly, to everyone's astonishment, the helicopter returned to Dili.

When they arrived back in Dili, all four said that they would not continue if they were not taken to the eastern zone. At first, the Indonesians said this was not possible as the clouds were thickening, even though the sky was cloudless. Then, they said that the helicopter was in need of repair. Finally, after more discussion, the delegation departed for Vikeke in the same helicopter.

Upon their arrival in Vikeke, people did not come out to welcome the delegation as happened elsewhere. They seemed not to be pleased to see the helicopter, the delegation and their escorts. It was clear that the people were under a lot of pressure. Not that there were signs of fear on their faces. Their faces were just expressionless.

The delegation visited military compounds and saw that special military units were stationed there. When they asked why this was, since they had been told that there was no Fretilin activity, no clear answer was given. The Indonesians kept on insisting that the region was peaceful.

Weber noticed a different psychological attitude in a small village near Baucau where they landed at their own request. Here the people ran out even though it was a military helicopter. It was clear here that there was no military confrontation going on.

Their next stop was Baucau. Upon arrival, Weber immediately sprang an unannounced request; she asked to visit the former Hotel Flamboyan, now known by Amnesty to be an interrogation centre. It was clear that her request was not welcome, but she insisted. There was a lot of discussion and eventually, it was agreed that they could go, but not before an Indonesian departed on a motorcycle. After visiting the Baucau market, they went to the former Hotel Flamboyan. She described it as a sinister place with a suffocating atmosphere. There was a long corridor with many small rooms. Some people were in military uniforms, others in civilian clothes. Some asked the delegation what they were doing there. After a while, they came upon a family of people

in a side building; they asked them what they were doing there and they said they were participating in a programme of development.

Meanwhile, the Indonesians were getting fed up. It was clear that people had been told to keep their mouths shut and it became clear that the Indonesians were not going to allow this to go on any longer. The delegation returned to Dili as it was beginning to get dark.

After returning to Dili, the delegation asked Governor Carrascalao and Mgr Belo about the function of Hotel Flamboyan [this question was apparently not answered]. The military were also asked about this. Following these inquiries, the military produced a book containing records of trials that have taken place. The delegation asked in particular about trials of military personnel charged for maltreating Timorese. Finally, they were told that two persons had indeed been prosecuted. Carrascalao and Belo admitted that such cases did occur but that any military who are convicted get light sentences. They both also said that they repeatedly receive complaints from Timorese about maltreatment by Indonesians.

Weber had the impression that the Indonesians were doing good things, like building better roads and many schools. All teaching is in Indonesian. She saw Timorese dances and thought them a dismal manifestation of tribal culture. [Weber is an expert on indigenous peoples.]

In Jakarta, Weber was contacted in her hotel room by East Timorese students who gave her a document. From this, she learnt that the students were under increasing pressure from the Indonesian intelligence. From this document also, she drew the conclusion that Fretilin is not prepared to enter into negotiations with the Indonesians.

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Extract from a report in the Dutch newspaper, Trouw, 25 August 1988, based largely on an interview of Beate Weber:

One of the eighteen recommendations (made by the delegation) concerns the withdrawal of the Indonesian military troops. Only an Indonesian police force should remain. [The wording in the recommendation is "and full responsibility transferred to the normal network of services]. "Indonesia says that there are only one to four hundred guerrillas hiding in the mountains," said Weber. "So, either they are not telling the truth, or they can withdraw their special troops without any problems."